

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A response method to a query about an address, comprising steps of:

receiving an address of a second apparatus from a
5 first apparatus;

conducting a connection test with the second
apparatus; and

returning a message corresponding to the
connection test result in the test step as a response
10 to the query about the address of the second apparatus
from the third apparatus.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the test
step includes a step of conducting a connection test
with the first apparatus using a protocol corresponding
15 to the address of the second apparatus.

3. The method according to claim 1, wherein the
reception step includes a step of receiving a first
query about the address of the second apparatus, and
receiving the address of the second apparatus from the
20 first apparatus, and the returning step includes a step
of receiving a second query about the address of the
second apparatus, and returning the message
corresponding to the connection test result in the test
step to the third apparatus in response to the second.

25 4. The method according to claim 1, wherein the
reception step comprises steps of: storing the address
of the second apparatus; and inactivating the stored
address of the second apparatus in accordance with an

expiration time of the address of the second apparatus, the test step includes a step of repeating a connection test for the address of the second apparatus within the expiration time, and the returning step includes a step
5 of returning the message corresponding to the latest connection test result in the test step.

5. A response program to a query about an address, comprising steps of:

receiving an address of a second apparatus from a
10 first apparatus;

conducting a connection test with the second apparatus; and

returning a message corresponding to the connection test result in the test step in response to
15 the query about the address of the second apparatus from the third.

6. The program according to claim 5, wherein the test step includes a step of conducting a connection test with the first apparatus using a protocol
20 corresponding to the address of the second apparatus.

7. The program according to claim 5, wherein the reception step includes a step of receiving a first query about the address of the second apparatus, and receiving the address of the second apparatus from the
25 first apparatus, and the returning step includes a step of receiving a second query about the address of the second apparatus, and returning the message corresponding to the connection test result in the test

step to the third apparatus in response to the second.

8. The program according to claim 5, wherein the reception step comprises steps of: storing the address of the second apparatus; and inactivating the stored
5 address of the second apparatus in accordance with an expiration time of the address of the second apparatus, the test step includes a step of repeating a connection test for the address of the second apparatus within the expiration time, and the returning step includes a step
10 of returning the message corresponding to the latest connection test result in the test step.

9. A response apparatus, comprising:
connection unit which connects a network; and
generation unit which generates a response
15 message to a query about an address of a second apparatus, the query is received from a third apparatus via the network connected to said connection unit, wherein said generation unit conducts a connection test with the second apparatus in accordance with the
20 address of the second apparatus received from a first apparatus via the network connected to said connection unit, and generates the response message corresponding to the connection test result.

10. The apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said
25 generation unit conducts a connection test with the first apparatus using a protocol corresponding to the address of the second apparatus.

11. The apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said

generation unit receives the address of the second apparatus from the first apparatus in response to a first query about the address of the second apparatus received via the network connected to said connection unit, and generates the response message to a second query about the address of the second apparatus, which is received via the network connected to said connection unit, in correspondence with the connection test result.

10 12. The apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said generation unit comprises storage unit which stores the address of the second apparatus, inactivates the address of the second apparatus stored in said storage unit in accordance with an expiration time of the address of the second apparatus, repeats a connection test for the address of the second apparatus within the expiration time stored in said storage unit, and generates the response message in accordance with the latest connection test result.

20 13. An address notification method comprising the steps of:

25 sending a query about address of a second apparatus to a first apparatus in response to a query about the address of the second apparatus received from a third apparatus and

notifying, to the third apparatus, the address of the second apparatus and an expiration time of the address of the second apparatus which is shorter than

an expiration time of the address of the second apparatus received from the first apparatus.

14. The method according to claim 13, wherein the notifying step includes a step of notifying, to the
5 third apparatus, the expiration time prevents allow the third apparatus from re using the address of the second apparatus.

15. An address notification program comprising the steps of:

10 sending a query about address of a second apparatus to a first apparatus in response to a query about the address of the second apparatus received from a third apparatus and

notifying, to the third apparatus, the address of
15 the second apparatus and an expiration time of the address of the second apparatus which is shorter than an expiration time of the address of the second apparatus received from the first apparatus.

16. The program according to claim 15, wherein the
20 notifying step includes a step of notifying, to the third apparatus, the expiration time that prevents the third apparatus from re using the address of the second apparatus.

17. An address notification apparatus comprising:
25 connection unit which connects a network; and
notification unit which notifies an address of an second apparatus to a third apparatus via the network connected to said connection unit, wherein the

notification unit sends a query about address of a
second apparatus to a first apparatus in response to a
query about the address of the second apparatus
received from a third apparatus, and notifies, to the
5 third apparatus, an expiration time of the address of
the second apparatus which is shorter than an
expiration time of the address of the second apparatus
received from the first apparatus.

18. The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the
10 notification unit notifies, to the third apparatus, the
expiration time that prevents the third apparatus from
re using the address of the second apparatus.